

First  
Issue!



# Foreign Comic Collector

Issue 1 / June 2013



## Featuring...

### Collector Spotlight

*LSComics, and what could quite possibly be the largest collection of Mexican comics in North America*

### Why Collect Foreign Comics?

*Comic book collecting with a foreign variant focus*

[www.foreigncomiccollector.webs.com](http://www.foreigncomiccollector.webs.com)







# Welcome to F.C.C.!

Welcome to the first edition of Foreign Comic Collector magazine. This thing has been a long time coming! Foreign variant comics AKA “foreigns” have started carving out a little niche amongst the larger comic collecting community. Its been slow, but this form of collecting has been steadily growing adherents every day. An online/print symbol of community needed to be created in my opinion. So I started slowly building up the resources, knowledge and contacts to make something like this “zine” happen. Id like to thank everyone that helped with editing, writing, and contributing! Enjoy the first edition, and feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or ideas for how we can make this thing we do better!

## Editor

Define999 (Matt)

define999FCC@yahoo.com

## On the cover

I have known Liam(Liaton9000) for a while now. Being one of the early adopters of the key based type of collecting within the field of foreigns Liam has a truly stunning collection. He is a strapping young lad from Canada with a voracious appetite for rare and key foreign books. As if that were not enough, many of his comics are CGC signature series. These signed and certified comics add another layer of rarity and novelty to an already unique collection. Id like to thank him for letting me use this impressive photograph for our first cover! Please visit his site at.....  
.....[foreigncomicbooks.yolasite.com](http://foreigncomicbooks.yolasite.com)

Collection Image courtesy of Liaton9000

If you would like to contact Liaton email him at.... [sturg2008@hotmail.com](mailto:sturg2008@hotmail.com)

[www.foreigncomiccollector.webs.com](http://www.foreigncomiccollector.webs.com)

## Mission Statement

The altruistic goal of attaining and sharing further knowledge and respect for foreign variants and all variants within the comic collecting community. This should be love focused, informative, and most of all fun!

## Featured in this issue:

- *Comic Book Collecting with a foreign variant focus (part 1) pg 3*
- *Collector Spotlight: Indiana native LSComics pg6*
- *Keyboard Tourist: A review of the huge Mexican comic database site Spidermex.com pg10*
- *The Limelight: Superman 233 key based set by Solarcadet pg12*





# Comic Book Collecting With a Foreign Variant Focus

by Define999 (Part 1)

## *The foreign comic book variant bias?*

Comic book collecting has been going on for quite awhile, decades at least. It's been a beloved facet of our geek culture for many years.

For American comic book lovers, the collective focus has for the most part been American comic books. Now that doesn't mean foreign comic books haven't been collected by Americans, whether they are original foreign creations or licensed material. It's just that this type of collecting has been more of a novelty or curious footnote for many American collectors through the years. It's safe to say that comic books, being an American pop culture creation, have skewed some collectors' thinking regarding foreign variants.

The language barrier notwithstanding, American collectors at least in the past have regarded foreign comic books as lesser-than or of inferior quality compared to the indigenous product we are used to. In many ways this logic is correct and in some ways maybe not. Now, I do not attempt to paint all American collectors with this same biased brush. But it is safe to say foreign licensed material has not been in any way shape or form on the "average," and I mean average collectors' radar here in the states now or has it ever been.

## *The winds of change*

There has been recent awareness and interest in these books both here in the states and even in other countries. Threads have appeared on prominent comic book chat boards along with websites showcasing foreign collections. A curious thing has happened. Awareness about these variants is growing and American collectors are discovering the novelty and value of foreign comic books, both culturally and even monetarily.



### Compare and contrast: Cover design

Spiderman 129, 1st appearance of the Punisher

American, German, French Canadian, Brazilian, Italian, Dutch, Mexican(newer), Mexican(older), Greek

A shift in thinking is taking place, and even though it's small, a new niche of comic book collecting is being born. A newfound respect and appreciation of these variants is slowly coming to the surface.

## *Where did this type of collecting come from?*

This is an interesting question? While having conversations with some international dealers about this phenomenon, it has led to interesting observations on rarity, value, general interest, and even a bit of irony when talking about foreign editions. I will get into some of these talking points more a bit later. It appears though that some of the first collectors to actively seek out foreign variants of multiple countries were for the most part foreign collectors.



## Are there different types of foreign variant collecting?

One international dealer from Canada told me a story about a foreign collector who is a fan of Classics Illustrated. This title can be difficult to collect because of not only the amount of issues, but also the huge quantity of foreign variant types, and reprints here in America.

This complexity didn't seem to scare this collector. In fact he upped the ante; his goal was to



Classics Illustrated  
Huckleberry Finn  
(American)



Classics Illustrated  
Huckleberry Finn  
(Greek)

collect every single issue of Classics Illustrated printed in every country he could find! When you factor in the amount of issues multiplied by the amount of countries that reprinted this popular American series - well, it's a staggering goal to say the least.



Classics Illustrated  
Huckleberry Finn  
(German)

Another collector it seems has made the attempt to collect every Spiderman issue he can find from every country that reprinted our beloved web-slinger. This task is a huge undertaking as well, and to even fathom this, a collector would need large amounts of time and money.

## The completest type

Like both collectors I mention above, this seems to have been the first type of foreign variant collecting - a desire to find every foreign variant of a specific title or category. This collector would seek out all of Classics Illustrated's foreigners, or all of the foreign Spiderman issues published.

This type takes a significant amount of time and money and is probably limited to collectors with sufficient funds and lots of time on their hands.

## The key issue based type

From my research, this is the newest type. This type seemed to be created by two forward thinking collectors with one being here in the states and the other residing in Canada. This is a key issue based type, a key being an important book that is valuable for both monetary and historic influence within the comic book collecting community.

The key issue based type is more reasonable with regards to financial concerns and time. In this type, the focus is with one solitary issue's foreign releases and not an entire run, country, or even category. This kind of collecting is believed to be only about 4 or 5 years old. The collector picks out which key issues have interest to them and actively seeks out those issues, avoiding the common and least impor-

Spiderman 300, 1st appearance of Venom



American

Finnish

Italian



Greek

Spanish

Swedish



Hungary

French

Dutch









FCC PRESENTS...

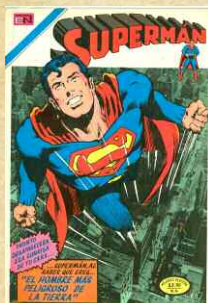
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# COLLECTOR SPOTLIGHT ON... LSComics

## How my foreign addiction began...

by LSComics

A little over three years ago I was growing bored with comic books. I've been in the hobby as a collector or dealer for the better part of 30 years and had grown tired of one thing. No matter what, with enough money anyone out there could essentially duplicate my collection. Even the CGC Signature



Mexican  
Action #419

Series books that comprised the bulk of what I had could be reproduced by someone submitting copies of the same books. I was, in all honesty, thinking of getting out of the hobby altogether. Well... until this. I was perusing the sales threads on the Collector's Society message boards and ran across something unusual. One of the board members was selling off some of his books and one of them in particular caught my eye. It was a French Canadian edition from the '70s that reprinted Batman #251 with that

classic, Neal Adams Joker looming over Gotham City. I don't recall now exactly how much he was asking for it just that it was in the \$10-\$25 range. I thought to myself that this would be a really interesting book to submit to CGC for Signature Series. No one else would have one.



UK  
FF #5

So I started looking for more foreign books, mostly on ebay. There were some but not a huge variety. It was about this time that I resigned myself to a focus for what would become the main body of my collection. Covers with art by Neal Adams or Bernie Wrightson. I kept looking and running searches in hopes of finding something else that would fit into the parameter I had set. It wasn't long before I stumbled across a book that piqued my curiosity, Creepy Worlds #36 published by Alan Class in the UK, reprinting Fantastic Four #5. Alright, so it's not exactly what I was looking for but it was really interesting. I bought it for, if my memory serves me correctly, \$50. I rather unintentionally had instantly expanded the guidelines of what I was looking to buy but thought I should try to learn a bit more about what I was getting myself into.

Back on the CS message boards there were a couple of guys that I had seen post Signature Series copies of foreign books and decided to send them each a message to find out if they knew anything about this British book I had just bought. Neither of

### Avengers #4 key based type CGC set



American



German



Mexican



UK



## A group shot of some of LSComics huge foreign collection



Countries or regions represented here: French Canada, Mexico, Australia, Italy, Philippines, Brazil, UK

them were really able to tell me anything about it however as their focuses centered more on collecting specific issues from all the various countries that had reprinted them. It didn't really matter, I was happy with the book I got and the price I paid. I continued to search and eventually started finding more books. House of Secrets #92 and Batman #227 from Mexico, Batman #251 and Green Lantern #76 from Germany.

Then I ran across a thread on the message boards titled Comic Collecting With a Foreign Variant Focus. It was full of interesting and useful information. By this time I'd acquired somewhere in the range of 75 to 100 books and really wanted to know more than even this article revealed about the foreign enigmas that were constantly increasing in numbers in my collection so I sent a message to the board member who wrote the article. We messaged back and forth, me asking questions, him answering them with what he knew and eventually agreed it was time for a phone conversation. It was around 9:00 AM on a Saturday morning when Define999 (Matt) first called me. I'm sure it had to be a little bit overwhelming with the barrage of question I hit him with. It didn't take long before we were talking about the various books we had. He was surprised to learn I had been able to get a hold of the previously mentioned Mexican edition of Batman #227 as you just don't see many of them but even more so by the House of Secrets #92. As of this writing I've still only seen three copies turn up. After that initial call we stayed in contact on the boards and over time the calls became more regular. Not too much later a Private Message thread was created which included

seven or eight board members all of whom collect foreign editions.

August 2012 is when things got really crazy. By this time I had my search methods refined to find books I wanted on ebay. If they showed up in a listing, I'd see them. A seller out of Mexico City started listing books published by Editorial Novaro in just amazing condition. Keep in mind that these books had large print runs but were distributed throughout South and Central America. Not exactly locals with climates conducive to preserving paper products or staples for that matter. In the majority of cases the best grade you'll find Novaro books in is in the VG range, Fine if you're really lucky. Anyway, this seller is listing books, some of which appear to easily be in the Very Fine range and some possibly higher. This was it, I was in the right place at the right time when these books came to light. A large portion of my collection is Novaro books solely because they printed an unbelievable amount of Silver and Bronze Age DC comics, many of which contain covers and/or interior art by Adams and Wrightson. It gave me the opportunity to really begin building runs of the books I wanted to find i.e. House of Secrets, House of Mystery, Batman, Detective Comics, Strange Adventures, Green Lantern, Spectre, Swamp Thing, Phantom Stranger, All-Star Western, Weird Western Tales and more. I've completed two runs and am within one or two books of completing about four others. The next step will be trying to decide what to submit to CGC for Signature Series. Based on not only the quantity but the quality of many of the books I now have there is no doubt in my mind that my collection is now and will remain truly



unique.

At the time I'm writing this my collection contains about 695 various foreign editions from at least 22 different countries.

Written by LSComics

If you would like to  
contact LSComics email  
him at

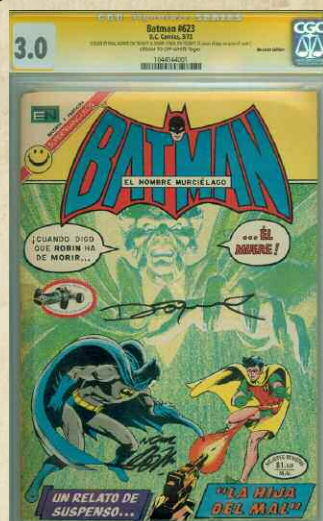
[lscomics@comcast.net](mailto:lscomics@comcast.net)



## *LSComics amazing Mexican Novaro collection!*

When I first set out on the endeavor of collecting foreign books my goal was rather simple. Or so I thought. The one book I wanted most, after I discovered that Editorial Novaro had reprinted a significant amount of DC material, was, by their numbering, Batman #623. It's the Mexican equivalent of Batman #232 here in the US and features the first appearance of Ra's Al Ghul, my favorite villain and in my opinion some of Neal Adams finest work with writer Denny O'Neil. Little did I know what lay ahead of me in accomplishing this task.

I searched and searched in what, after several months, seemed like vain to find a copy, any copy of this book. It eluded me for a good long time. Finally a copy turned up on ebay in the US. It was a little rough, with had tape along a little over half of the spine. I didn't care, I wanted it and would bid aggressively to own it. The starting bid was \$24.99 and the auction was set to run for five days. I put it on my watch list and checked back on it frequently to see if there were any bids yet. Nothing, no one seemed to notice it, probably because it was listed by the Novaro issue number with no reference to it's American counterpart. The final day of the auction arrived, more specifically the final hour. I was fortunate enough to be able to be home and in front of my computer at the time. The clock ticked down to 54 minutes, 38 minutes, 22 minutes. Still no bids. When it reached the 5 minute mark I placed a bid of \$50 hoping it would be enough to win. When it reached the final minute I could feel my heart beating faster, I really wanted this book. With thirty seconds left I refreshed the screen, no change in the bid. Finally it hit the final ten seconds, then five, four, three, two. The auction was over, I had won for the minimum bid. I didn't care that it was a low grade copy with tape on the spine, I'd been looking for months and coming up empty handed but now I had found it unaware of what it would lead to.



Batman #232 Mexico CGC



Witching Hour #1 Mexico



HOM #174 Mexico



HOS #81 Mexico

As the next few month passed I continued to research just what was out there waiting to be found and with the help of a few new friends who also collected foreign editions learned that Novaro had published a plethora of DC content for the Spanish speaking populace. My interest and want list grew

Do you have an idea for a foreign related story or information you would like to share?

Contact [define999FCC@yahoo.com](mailto:define999FCC@yahoo.com) and share away.....

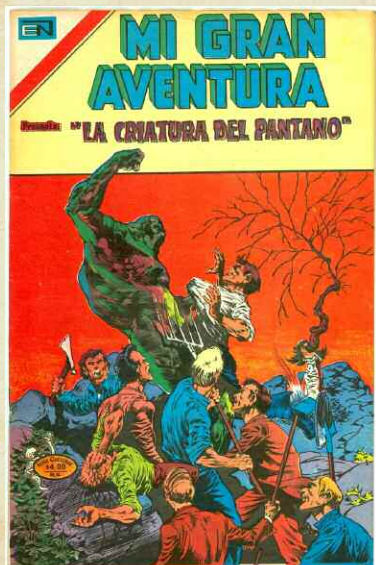




Phantom Stranger #114 Mexico



Strange Adventures #205 Mexico



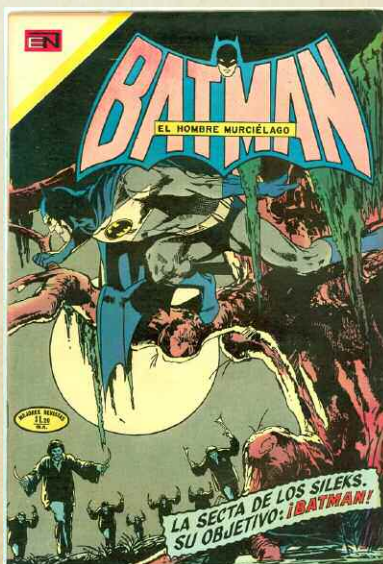
Swamp Thing #5 Mexico



HOS #92 Mexico



Spectre #4 Mexico



Detective #405 Mexico

constantly with the discovery of more and more titles, Cuentos de Misterio (House of Mystery and Witching Hour), Relatos Fabulosos (House of Secrets), Titanes Planetarios (Strange Adventures), Historias Fantásticas (Phantom Stranger and Unexpected), El Halcon de Oro (Spectre) and Mi Gran Aventura (Swamp Thing). All of them containing art by Neal Adams and Bernie Wrightson. How long would it take me to find copies of all of these? If just this one issue of Batman, a much more popular title with a larger print run for certain, was so difficult to track down then what about these? Some of them are considerably more obscure and surely had lower print runs. My head spun trying to wrap my brain around the idea.

It's been almost three years since then. I've spent a significant amount of time and money doing it but have finally completed two of those runs.

El Halcon de Oro (Spectre) only consists of four Neal Adams covers but are extremely difficult to find according to more than one collector I've spoken to about them in Mexico.

Historias Fantásticas (Unexpected) is a little larger run of books with a total of nine Adams covers.

I'm in the process of negotiating deals to acquire the last two books I need for two other runs as well.

Relatos Fabulosos (House of Secrets) has a total of 17 books with covers by Adams or Wrightson in the original US run but only 16 were reprinted by Novaro and I have 15 of those now. For some unknown reason they skipped issue #93. I was fortunate enough to find #160 early on, it reprints House of Secrets #92 with the first appearance of Swamp Thing. In over three years I've only seen two copies other than my own. Once I finish this run I hope to be able to submit them for Signature Series by Adams and Wrightson.

Titanes Planetarios (Strange Adventures) reprints the 12 issue Deadman series. This is another run of books that, based on the accounts of collectors in Mexico, you just don't see. I have 11 of them with the first one, #285 (#205 in the US) being a Signature Series copy that's signed by the late Carmine Infantino. It's only a 4.5 but it's the only Infantino signed SS copy that will ever exist. Upon completion of the run my plan is to submit the remaining 11 issues for SS by Neal Adams.



# KEYBOARD



## The Amazing Spidermex.com

by Gustavo Medina

Former Novaro, Novedades and Vid translator

A couple of years ago I was thrilled to finally see vintage Mexican Spider-man comics on sale in Mercado Libre (The Mexican Ebay), including those I had translated for Novedades. The only problem was that I had not kept a list of the issue numbers so I had to rely on my memory to remember which ones I had worked on. Just about then, while surfing the net, I came across a wonderful web site designed by Juan Tello and managed today by Raúl Pantoja: The Amazing Spider-Mex.

This painstakingly researched cover database includes up-to-date cross-referenced lists of virtually every Spider-Man comicbook ever printed in Mexico. Included are those published by La Prensa, Macc Ediciones, Novedades, Vid and Televisa. The cover scans are Hi-rez and all info is cross-referenced with the original Marvel editions. Some of the key issues have plot summaries and everything is depicted in chronological order.

Also included are sections that present fan art, movie information and the History of all the different Mexican Publishing Houses that have presented the exploits of our ever-lovin' web crawler.

On the down side, you get a message of faulty Java -script programming when accessing certain sections which deters from the overall experience. The interface is a bit cluttered and the design is not very pleasing to the eye.

All in all, The Amazing Spider-Mex and its sister site. El Baúl del comic (The comicbook Treasure chest) are an invaluable resource for those interested in collecting foreign key variant editions of

Page 10 Marvel's Stalwart Web-slinging Super-

## Spider-mex screenshot



Spider-mex.com does a wonderful job of cross-referencing books by both the Mexican and American publishers. This can be a great tool when researching books for inclusion into foreign key based type sets. For foreign variant collectors Spider-mex.com is a must use website for researching Mexican editions for those important runs and sets.

hero. Julio recently added a donate button to the Spider-Mex site to get some money to pay for both sites, which he pays for on his own, so feel free to click on it and help him out. Nuff said! and Excelsior!

## Spider-mex at a glance

### Positives

- Painstakingly Researched database
- Cross-referenced books with both Mexican and thier American counterparts
- High Rez Cover scans
- Fan art, Movie info, and information on Mexican publishers

### Negatives

- Java script problems on some pages
- Clunky design at times
- Interface problems, confusing elements





# Up Close and Personal with Finland's Gigant #2

by LSComics

**G**igant #2 was published in Finland in 1984. It's a square bound 100 page comic that reprints, in black and white, several books originally published in the United States.

The first feature is the classic Swamp Thing #7 by Len Wein and Bernie Wrightson. The quality of the printing is excellent to say the least. Wrightson's art is nothing short of breathtaking in most cases but to see this classic presented in stark black and white is just amazing. It gives you a true sense of the talent of this man who brings shadows to life.

Next is Brave and the Bold #108 starring Batman and Sgt. Rock masterfully rendered by the late Jim Aparo. If you've never seen his work sans color you're really missing out. He was a master of his craft and it really shows in this story. From the layout of the panels to the expressions on each character's face, it's clear that he knew how to tell a story visually.

For those whose taste is more on the modern spectrum of comic books there's also installments of



Camelot 3000 by Mike Barr & Brian Bolland and Justice League of America by Gerry Conway & George Perez with a little help from Brett Breeding.

Overall you would have a difficult time choosing a group of artists who's work comes across as well, if not better, in black and white than it does in color.

Finnish Swamp Thing #7



Träskmannen directly translated means **swamp man**



Läderlappen is an older Finnish translation name for **Batman**.



The artwork for this book was reproduced in crisp black and white and is stunning to behold



## Quick Fact!

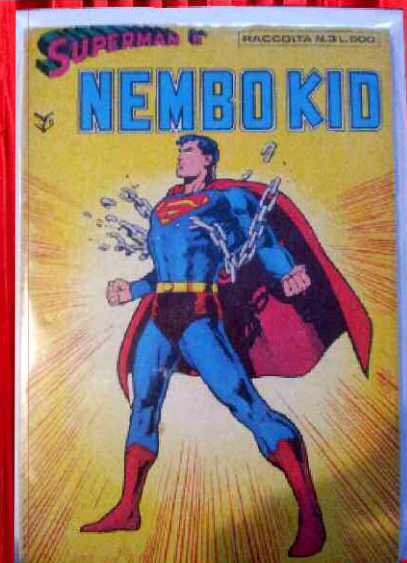
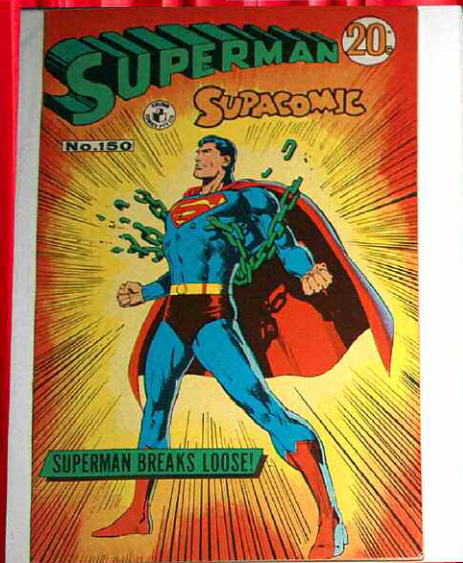
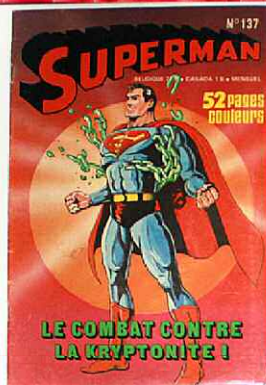
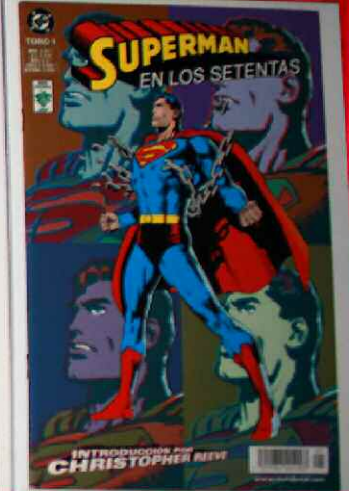
In 1989 then editor at Marvel, Mark E. Gruenwald wrote that Marvel's foreign licensing department had Marvel product being produced by 40 different publishers in 26 countries and 16 different languages!



# The Limelight

*The Limelight presents...*

Solarcadets Superman 233 set!  
Iconic cover, key issue, Adams artwork,  
whats not to love about this set?  
Nothing, enjoy....



Countries from left to right and descending onto subsequent pages.... Japan, Japan, Mexico, Mexico, Finland, Canada, Norway, Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, China, Italy, Brazil, Italy (softcover), Italy (hardcover), France, France, America, UK(magazine), Sliding puzzle, Hot Wheel



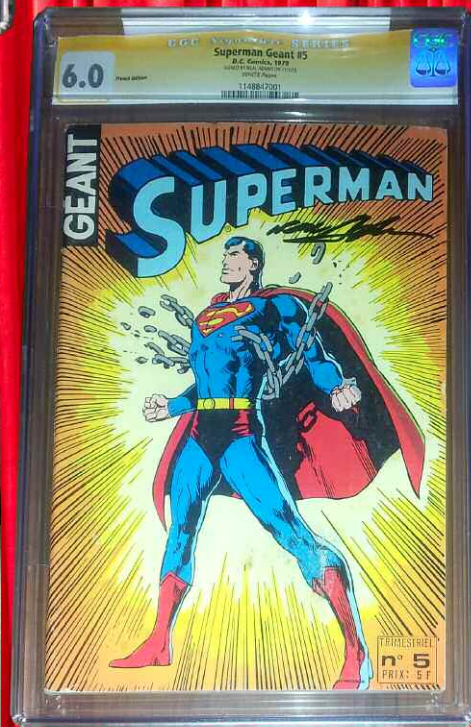
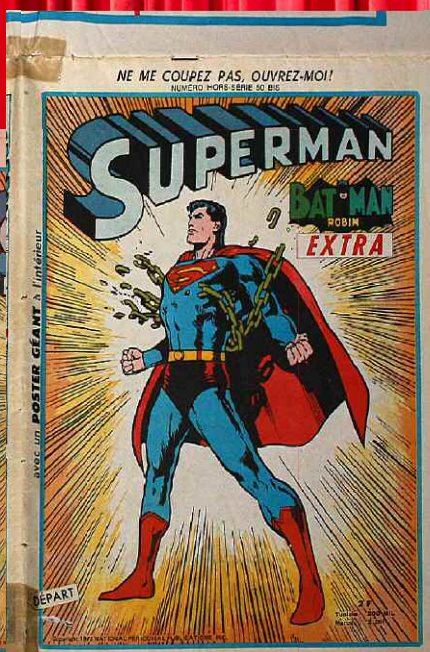
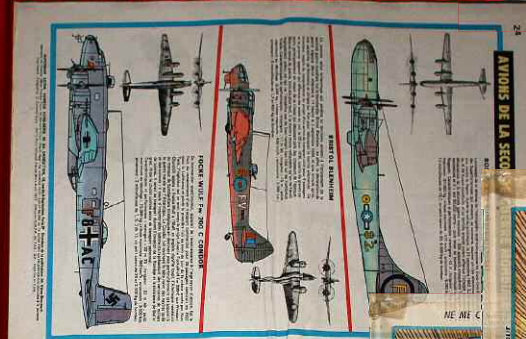
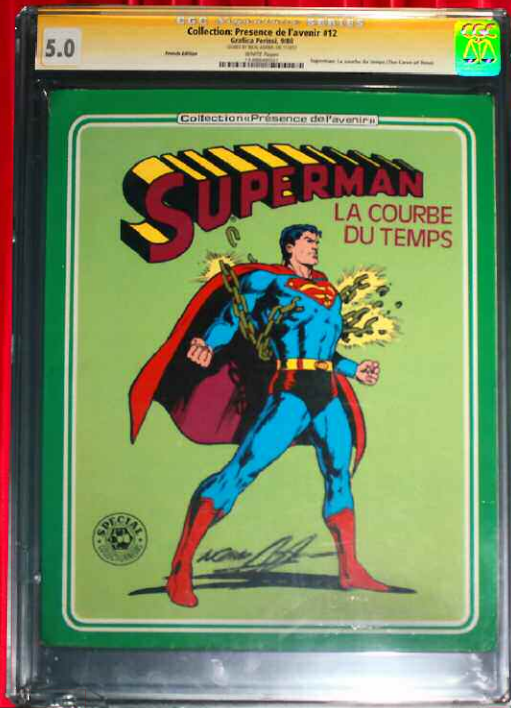
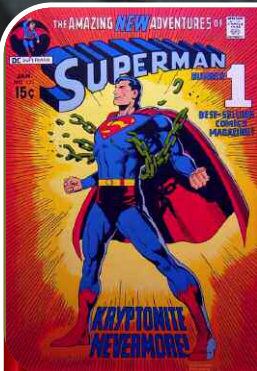
# Superman Vol 1 #233 January, 1971

Superman breaks loose

Cover artist: Neal Adams  
Writer: Dennis O'Neil  
Penciler: Curt Swan  
Inker: Murphy Anderson

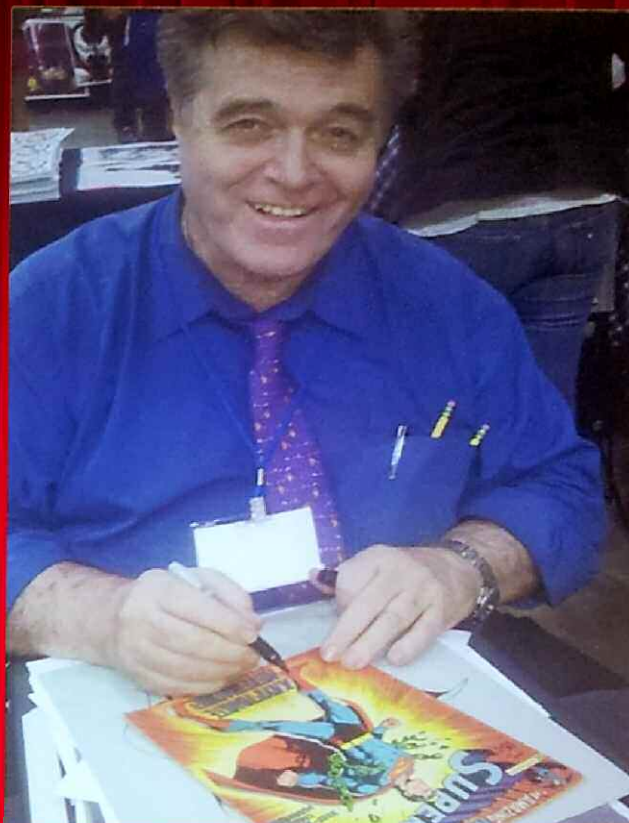
Jor-El's Golden Folly

Writer: E. Nelson Bridwell  
Penciler: Murphy Anderson  
Inker: Murphy Anderson

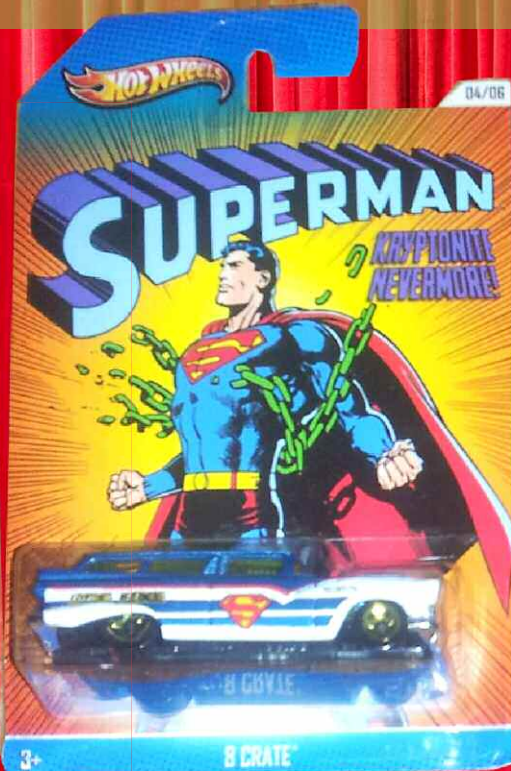
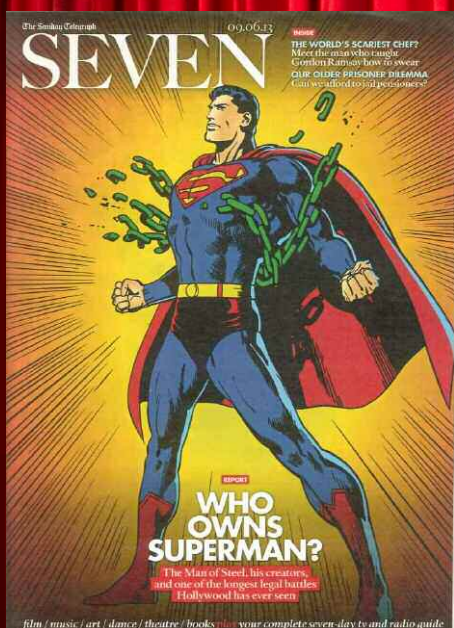


**Why is this issue important?** First part of the Sandman storyline. Also, an experiment involving kryptonite goes haywire causing all kryptonite on planet earth to turn into harmless iron. This leads the reader to believe Superman is now completely invulnerable! The chain breaking symbolism being a huge factor in the iconic Adams cover art.





Neal Adams signed Solarcadet's American #233 on 9/15/2012 at Long Beach Comic Con last year. Its a low grade (CGC 4.0) but it was sentimental as his dad bought it for him way back in 1986! Thanks Neal!



Printed on toys, puzzles, sleeping bags, t-shirts, and of course comic books all over the world, Superman #233 is possibly be the most marketed and recognizable Superman cover of all! It was my favorite superman cover and was one of the first that I ever discovered with foreign variants. The Superman 233 cover is the largest reproduced cover spanning 15 countries in 25 different variations.

Solarcadet



# Contributors this issue...

## Define999

I got into foreign variants a couple of years ago and this journey sure has been crazy! This isn't a niche you want to get into if you get mad easily, or get frustrated when things do not go your way. I live in the high deserts of New Mexico and raising my 1 wife, 2 kids, 1 dog, 1 hamster, and 4 fish keep me busy when I am not obsessing about foreign comics related madness!

## LSComics

A.K.A Tim Bildhauser: I've been collecting comic books for 28 years and have been chasing foreign editions for going on four years now. In that time I've assembled a collection that exceeds 700 foreign comics from over twenty countries.

My main focus is books with covers by Neal Adams or Bernie Wrightson but if you browse my Photobucket folders you'll see a diverse range of Silver and Bronze Age foreign books. Believe it or not before I became interested in foreign editions I was nearing the point of leaving the hobby behind. I was sure I'd seen it all and knew all there was to know. I had no idea how wrong I was.



## Gustavo Medina

Gustavo Medina is probably the first fan turned Pro in Mexico City. He began translating comic books at Editorial Novaro in 1981. He then went on to translate more than 200 comic books for Novedades Editores, The Mexican House of Ideas and ended his career at Editorial Vid as both a translator and an Editor. He now makes a living as an English Teacher.



## Solarcadet

I grew up in the mid 1980s collecting comics right in the middle of the copper age. By the 1990s me and my dad were going to all the comic conventions and wheeling and dealing on high end books.

Unfortunately I slowly lost interest in the new direction of modern age comics. After getting my degree in Criminology I began playing music and forgot all about comics.

In 2012 I finally opened up my time capsuled collection that has sat dormant for nearly 20 years in my parents home. The reunion with my cherished books brought back a strong sense of nostalgia.

So I found myself on Ebay and searching values when I stumbled across a German printing of ASM129 and thought it was fascinating so I bought it. I began doing google searches of other key titles and quickly discovered awesome foreign interpretations of Superman 233, and Batman 227. With a newfound focus I quickly snatched up foreign Batman 227's and went to get them signed by Neal Adams. Define999 found me, connected me with the foreign variant community, and the rest is, as they say...foreign history!



## Liaton9000

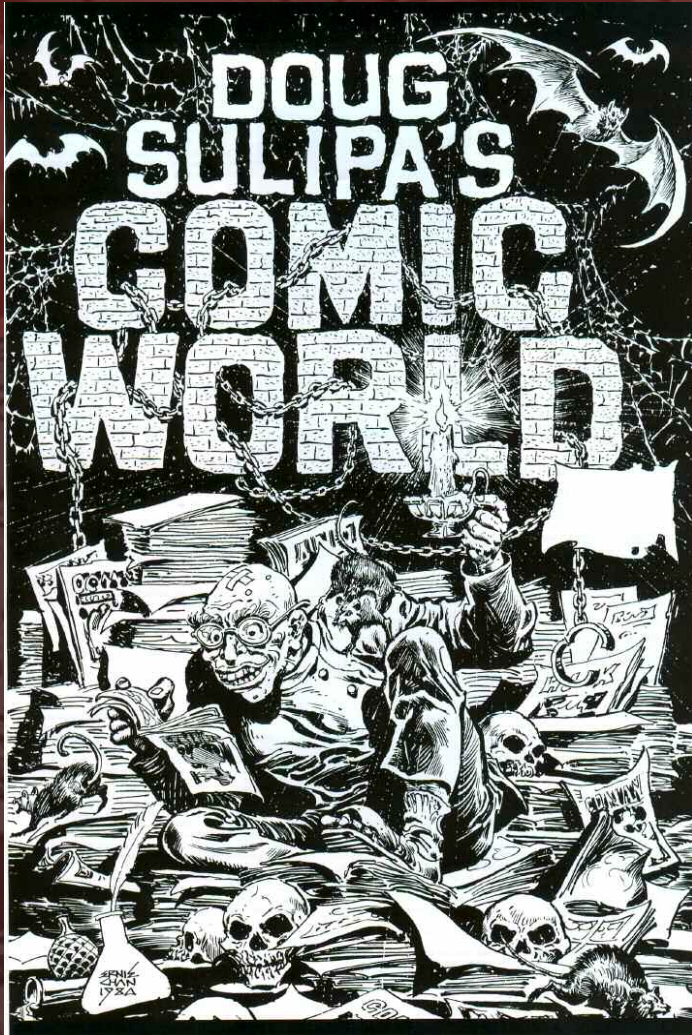
I started collecting foreign comics several years ago alongside my friend Hector, and I am proud to say I have one of the most complete sets of key Marvel comics.

I enjoy comics from all countries and ages. My favourite part of this niche of collecting is the discovery of a new edition. When I'm not hunting for foreigners, I am an Economics student, a musician and I am a second Dan Black Belt in Tae-Kwon-Do.

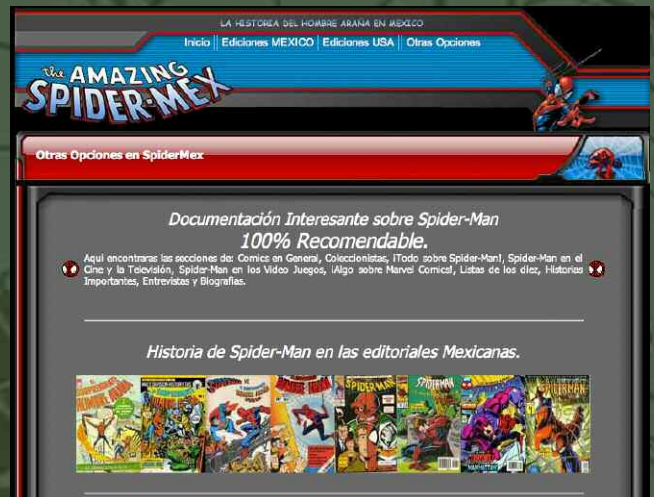


# Friends of FCC!

Here at FCC we have decided not to monetize the zine at this time. The ads you see on the back cover are not paid advertisements but people within the comic book world we appreciate for helping us source books, being amazing vendors, creating environments that excite us or just plain rock our socks off! Don't be afraid to check them out....



Doug is one of the few dealers who has been screaming from the rooftops for years about how cool the French Editions Heritage books are in his Overstreet market reports. With his worldwide contacts and his good natured way Doug is one dealer every foreign hunter should know. Great guy and worth your time in giving him a foreign want list! Thanks Doug for being a friend of FCC!



What can I say? Are you trying to complete foreign sets of Spiderman and need to re-research the Mexican editions? Spidermex is the be all end all of Mexican Spidey!

<http://www.spidermex.com/>



Lyria the exchange, whats not to like? Collectable trend tracking, cool interface, forums with highly informed members, and a legacy of being dedicated to debating and researching the comics market for years! Also, if the CGC boards are the swanky elitist club you can never seem to get into, then the Lyria forums are the neighborhood corner bar where everyone knows your name! Check them out.....

<http://www.lyriacomicexchange.com/>